

# Missouri River

## RECOVERY PROGRAM

2008-05

### **Good News! Critical Habitat Acquisition Plan Signed**

The acquisition plan for the two proposed Multiple Award Task Order Contracts was signed by the Principal Assistant Responsible for Contracting on April 21. This acquisition plan details the MRRP strategy for construction of critical habitat to accomplish the mitigation goals outlined in the Missouri River Fish and Wildlife Mitigation Project, and to ensure compliance with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 2000 Biological Opinion (amended 2003).

The plan provides for a \$90 million unrestricted and \$10 million restricted construction contracting capacity over a five-year period. The geographic scope is within the Missouri River main channel, the Missouri River flood plain and the lower portions of larger tributaries between Gavins Point Dam, SD and the mouth of the river near St. Louis, Mo.

The pre-solicitation announcement for the \$90 million unrestricted construction contract was posted April 22.

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### **New on MRRP Web Site**

The 2007 Annual Report, showing compliance with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's 2000 Biological Opinion, as amended in 2003, is complete. It is available at [www.moriverrecovery.org](http://www.moriverrecovery.org) in Key Documents (under the General Information tab); click on 2007 Annual Report to have a look.

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### **Agency Coordination Team Meeting**

The Missouri River Recovery/Mitigation Quarterly Agency Coordination Team Meeting was held in St. Joseph, Mo., on March 26. Representatives of state and federal agencies, as well as other interested stakeholders from the four-state area, attended. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 3, and the four affected states (Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas and Missouri) participate through a Coordination Team that was developed to formulate and decide upon the various acquisition and development sites. They have been meeting for about 20 years.

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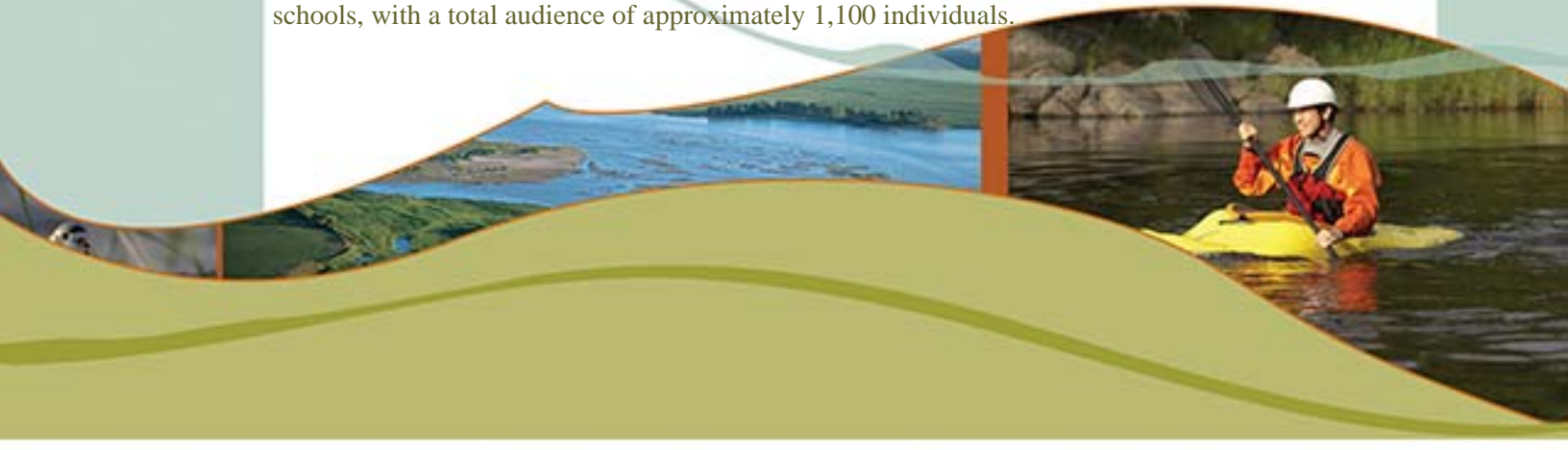
### **MRERP Reaches Out**

The Missouri River Ecosystem Restoration Plan team will be gathering input from the Federal Working Group, states and Tribes over the next couple months on a planning framework and study approach. The team also plans to do the same outreach at upcoming MRRIC meetings. For more information, contact Jennifer Switzer at 816-389-3062 or Randy Sellers at 402-995-2689.

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### **Least Tern & Piping Plover Outreach**

In March and April 2008 Gene Bormann conducted endangered species outreach programs at schools in Nebraska and South Dakota. The presentations had an audience of 220 students and their teachers. For the 2007-2008 school year, Gene has made presentations to one university, one civic group and 15 schools, with a total audience of approximately 1,100 individuals.



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### **Least Tern & Piping Plover Monitoring**

This year's bird monitoring season began on April 4, 2008. During the month, Corps personnel observed piping plovers on the constructed island complex at RM 827 on Lewis & Clark Lake, in the Gavins Point River Segment, and at the east and upper ends of Lake Sakakawea.

The restriction signs that are placed on sandbars to deter human disturbance of least tern and piping plover nesting sites were redesigned over the winter. The new signs are state-specific for Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, South Dakota/Nebraska and Kansas. The signs inform the public that the area is an endangered bird nesting site and includes diagrams of the least terns and piping plovers. The signs inform the public that no entry, no pets, no ATVs, no vehicles and no boat landings are allowed in areas where the signs are posted. The signs contain state or federal phone numbers for the public to report violations.

The new restriction signs were placed on the constructed island complex in Lewis & Clark Lake and on the constructed sandbars at RM 761.3 and 755.0 on the Gavins Point River Segment on April 28 and April 29, respectively.

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### **MRRIC Update**

Government-to-Government consultation on the Recommended Charter for MRRIC continues with basin Tribes. To date, the Corps and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have met with six Tribes, while three more consultation meetings are scheduled for May. A revised version of the Recommended Charter that incorporates the Tribes' concerns, will be forwarded via e-mail to the Planning Group. The Planning Group has discussed incorporating minor changes into the document and may approve the changes via e-mail or a conference call.

USACE Headquarters and the office of the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) continue to review the Recommended Charter. Approval of the Charter by ASA Woodley is anticipated following the wrap up of Government-to-Government consultation with the Tribes.

The Federal Working Group developed a Memorandum of Understanding to formalize the agreement between the federal agencies that will be participating in the MRRIC. If the Charter is approved by the meeting date, the MOU will be signed by the federal executives in the basin at the Missouri River Basin Interagency Roundtable (MRBIR) meeting in Denver on May 29.

The Federal Working Group is developing the application and selection process for stakeholder membership on the MRRIC. The application process will begin once the Charter is approved.

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### **New MRRP Team Member**

Brad Thompson, a community planner with the Rock Island District, started a 90-day temporary assignment to assist with the MRRP. He has extensive background with ecosystem planning on the Upper Mississippi and Illinois Rivers and completed a temporary assignment to assist with the Everglades in 2006.

He will be working with MRRP staff to develop a Planning Assessment/GAP Analysis of the program. The major product will be a 50 to 100-page planning assessment report that will include current program status and progress and recommendations for refining the program.

Brad will be located in Omaha on the 7th floor of the Zorinsky Building and can be reached at (402) 995-2679. In the coming weeks, Brad will be contacting many MRRP staff and scheduling some meetings and conference calls to discuss the program and progress for the assessment/analysis.